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LETTERS
TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
LORD JOHN RUSSELL.
ON THE
GOVERNMENT
OF
BRITISH AMERICA.
1846.

by
Joseph Hume

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LETTER I.

MY LORD,—

During the summer of 1839 I did myself the honor to address to your Lordship four letters on the subject of Colonial Government. Your Lordship—with the love of rational liberty which characterizes your family, but with the caution of a prudent statesman—was at that time dealing with the questions raised by Lord Durham's Report, and seemed embarrassed by doubts and apprehensions which it was the design of that brochure to remove. I have not the vanity to suppose that the pamphlet is remembered, or that a copy of it is still in your possession ; but I have the satisfaction to reflect, that, slowly permeating through the mass of British and Colonial society, and tested, with more or less of sincerity, by Governors and Legislators ever since, the main principles it advocated have, by their own intrinsic value, forced their way, until millions of British subjects regard them as indispensable guarantees for the peaceful development of their resources, and the integrity of the Empire.

Deeply engrossed, during the last seven years, with a series of commercial and political questions in which the people of the United Kingdom felt a lively interest, your Lordship has had but little leisure to devote to a minute inspection of the progress which the Colonists were making in the science of self Government. Called again, by the command of your Sovereign, and the confidence of Parliament, to the administration of public affairs, it now becomes indispensable to the satisfactory discharge of your high duties, that you should study, with a thoughtful accuracy of investigation, the steps by which these noble

possessions of the Crown have advanced in the march of improvement; and that you should inquire whether there may not be means, but partially developed, or wholly unapplied, by which all fears of separation between Great Britain and her North American Provinces may be forever set at rest. Canning boasted, that, by recognizing the independence of South America, he had called a new world into existence : may it be your Lordship's boast, that by admitting the just claims—developing the resources—and anticipating the natural and honourable aspirations, of North Americans, you have woven links of love between them and their mother country, and indefinitely postponed all desire for independence.

This elevated species of ambition the people of British America ascribe to your Lordship. The part you took in Lord Durham's mission—the support you gave to Lord Sydenham—the despatches, (which, however variously interpreted, were truly described by him* who declared that they conferred “a new and improved constitution on these Colonies”) furnish abundant proofs, that, in colonial, as in all other reforms, your mind has advanced in the right direction. That you have had doubts, and apprehensions, and difficulties, to contend with, has not impaired our confidence—that these have been overcome, your recent declaration of the policy your government intends to pursue, is decisive and gratifying evidence.

Reposing in a quiet nook of my own country, after seven toilsome years spent in giving practical proofs to its people of the value of the principles advocated in 1839, I read that declaration : and, while the tears glistened in my eyes, I felt that, however refreshing the seclusion, this was not the moment to leave a Government, honestly disposed, and thus publicly pledged, to work out their plans, without the encouragement that sympathy, and the lights which Colonial experience, on this side the water, could supply. I

* Sir John Harvey.

mused upon the boundless field of labour your Lordship was about to enter—the herculean tasks which lay every where around you—the onerous cares, which, as First Minister of the Crown, you were called upon to assume, and I felt that a man so placed, was not only entitled to hear the kindly “God speed” of the colonist, but to have the benefit of every ray of light that might guide him on his way.

When legislating for the Mother Country, your Lordship has the aid of Representatives and Colleagues from every portion of the three kingdoms. No English interest can be overlooked, because every section of the country can hold constant communication with the Cabinet, through Parliamentary or other agents. Scotchmen convey to the Councils of their Sovereign, and infuse into the discussions of the Legislature, the facts, impressions, and even prejudices, without a knowledge of which there can be no successful statesmanship; and even Ireland, unequal and unjust as her portion of Parliamentary and Executive influence is, has yet a share. Her voice, even when disregarded, is still heard; 105 members enforce her opinions in Parliament—able pens discuss questions which concern her in every part of the kingdom; and her national associations, and the ceaseless activity of her selected leaders, make her voice authoritative, if not potential, in each crisis of affairs. To deal wisely with countries so situated, though often perplexing, is not impracticable: there is a fulness of information—an ever swelling or receding stream of public sentiment, and an abundance of fellow-labourers, to enable a prudent statesman to correct his reckoning and steer his course. To the mariner within soundings, the headlands are a guide, and the lead conveys every moment its assurance or its warning—but the seaman who embarks on an ocean voyage, excites our fears by the comparative paucity of his resources not less than by the perils of his way.

The statesman who undertakes to govern distant countries, and particularly such Provinces as those of North America, at the present time, assumes a task of still greater difficulty and hazard. Grant him all the aids which he could desire, and those who are tender of his reputation, or interested in his experiment, may well tremble for his success, if they do not anticipate his blunders. Look around, my Lord, and see how few aids you have: ask yourself how you would govern Scotland, without one Scotchman in Parliament—in the Cabinet—or in the Home Department, to aid you; yet North America is to be governed, with a territory twenty times as extensive, and a population nearly as large, and not one North American near you to lend his assistance. There is one, at least, my Lord, at a distance—who, grateful for past services done to his country—regardless of the barriers which the publication of his opinions may again interpose on the humble walks of Provincial ambition, would gladly supply, to some extent, a deficiency which any man called to the task your Lordship has assumed, must almost instantly feel. To attempt this appears to me a duty, which I cannot, as an admirer of your Lordship, and a believer in your sincerity, put aside. Even the leisure, vowed to my family after many toilsome years devoted to the public affairs of Nova Scotia, appears a criminal indulgence; when, by a little exertion, the position, requirements, and just demands, of these noble Provinces may be simply explained; and the way cleared for your Lordship to deepen the verdure of the Colonial laurels you have already won. If your Lordship, and the men who now surround you, cannot lay the foundations of British power on this continent on an indestructable basis, then I fear I shall not live to see the work complete; and if not perfected before the swelling surges of republicanism make breaches here and breaches there, the waste of material, and the hazard of inundation, will be in exact proportion to

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the delay. Borrowing wisdom from the modern history of Ireland, what is to be done for North America should be done promptly—generously, in a spirit not of a grudging step mother giving a gratuity, but of brethren sharing an inheritance.

Your Lordship possesses, I believe, the disposition and the power to deal with our difficulties, and to fulfil our hopes. Like the poor blind man, on the Derbyshire hills, I may know the shortest tracks, for my feet are familiar with every stone—but your Lordship must prove the value of local knowledge by the tests of higher science, and the advantage of a commanding position ; and will be entitled, when the Queen's highway is completed, to all the merit of the work.

Let me endeavor, as briefly as I can, to group, for your Lordship's information, the results of our Colonial experience since I last addressed you. For many years previous to that period, permanently placed Executive officers— independent of the Legislatures, and invariably sustained, whether right or wrong, by the British Government, ruled these Provinces for their own advantage, irrespective of the interests or the confidence of the people. Those men had rarely the magnanimity boldly to assume the unpopularity of their own acts or policy. By artful correspondence they generally contrived to extract from the Colonial office a sanction of all they did, or desired to do ; and never failed to assure those who complained, that they were constrained by Imperial authority, and acting under instructions. The colonists were thus habitually trained to regard the Mother Country, if not as an enemy, at least as an eccentric, exacting, and injudicious friend. The Colonial office was clothed with a character not easy to describe : it was Pandora's box, with hope only for cravens and sycophants at the bottom ; it was a manufactory, into which grievances went by the quire, and injuries came out by the bale ; it was the

lion's mouth, where enemies might deposit accusations, and into which honest men looked with awe. I freely admit that it did not always deserve this reputation—that much sterling integrity, patient investigation, and high honor, often presided at the Colonial office ; and that, even under the worst administrations, there was a more sincere desire to benefit the Colonies among the leading minds of the Department, than the colonists were taught to believe. But it was almost impossible, under the old system, that the Colonial Office could achieve any higher reputation : the eyes of Argus could not have glanced over the remote regions it was called on to inspect—the hands of Briareus would have wearied with the multifarious labours it was expected to perform. The most promising and laborious public men, in the Colonial office, sunk in a year or two to one common level of unpopularity. A more accomplished scholar—a more accessible, amiable, and ordinarily industrious nobleman, than Lord Glenelg, never held the seals. His published Despatches display vigor and clearness of design—goodness of heart, and habitual suavity of temper, with an enlarged liberality of sentiment, humanity, and good taste, that in his modest retirement, as they did in his official capacity, do him infinite honor. Yet Lord Glenelg, enveloped in the countless webs which the old system wove around him, was driven into a sort of incomprehensible disgrace. No man gave the old system a fairer trial—no man less deserved the fate to which it almost inevitably consigned its victims.

Your Lordship escaped, by cutting the gordian knots which no living genius could unwind. By adopting promptly the leading principles of Lord Durham's report, you opened a vista through the surrounding darkness ; by throwing back upon the colonists the rubbish and the responsibilities which were accumulating in the Department, you secured freedom of respiration, and room to move ; and excited

to activity a body of public spirited men, in all the Colonies, who were rejoiced to find themselves trusted, and were eager to be employed. Now mark the change. In the seven years previous to 1839, the Journals of every North American Colony presented their annual Bill of Indictment against the Governments, in the form of Addresses to the Crown; and although, from motives of policy, the Imperial authorities were not always directly charged with the grievances enumerated, yet sometimes they were openly implicated and boldly menaced; and those who mingled freely in Colonial society, frequently felt, that if the phraseology of those documents was courteously guarded, more was often meant than met the ear. During the last seven years no such Addresses have, to my knowledge, emanated from the Colonial Assemblies, for the simplest of all reasons—grievances have been removed, by the circumambient pressure of responsibility upon the Executive Heads of Departments, and officers of Government; or where it was inconvenient to remove them, the storms occasioned by their continuance, have burst over the heads of those whose folly or cupidity evoked them—their far off murmurs only being heard amidst the unwonted tranquility of Downing Street.

Within the seven years previous to 1839, the Colonial office was besieged with Delegations: Upper and Lower Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland, all sent Delegates—some once, some twice, or thrice, with portfolios full of papers. These missions were rendered indispensable, from the obstructions interposed to the transmission of correct intelligence, and the mystification in which the whole subject of Colonial Government had become involved, by the operation of an absurd and impracticable system. Fancy Lord Normanby sitting in grave deliberation, while four gentlemen argued before him the important *Imperial* questions, of how much salary

a Nova Scotian Judge should have, and who should sit in our Executive Council ! These questions your Lordship wisely transferred to the Colonial Legislatures. Simple resolutions now settle the most of them—the Governors, if they can combine the support of a Parliamentary majority, appoint whom they please ; and the Judges, after the calm deliberation of a Committee of Supply, get just as much money as the country they serve is willing or able to grant. No Delegations have gone to Downing Street since 1839. Your Lordship wisely changed the battle grounds, and our leading men have had enough to do at home.

In the seven years previous to 1839, there were two Insurrections, costing four millions sterling. From the moment that the leader of Lord Sydenham's Government boldly avowed, in his place in the Assembly, the responsibility which he and his colleagues owed to the Legislature, down to the present time, you might, (but for questions of foreign policy) have defended North America with a Sergeant's Guard.

These have been the grateful fruits of what we used to call Responsible Government—of that “new and improved Constitution,” shadowed forth in your Lordship's Despatches, and practically developed and illustrated by the energy, sagacity and patriotism, of the Colonists ; until what was theory in 1839, has grown into a system of easy application to all conceivable cases—securing internal tranquility, and relieving every Colonial minister, who is wise enough to refrain from injudicious interference, of a vast amount of labour. I do not mean to say, my Lord, that every question of salary—of mal-administration—of grievance, in every Colony, is at an end—that there are not party conflicts, and personal rivalries still ruffling the surface of society—that a Governor who does not comprehend the new system, or a Secretary who will interrupt its natural operation,

may not still give trouble, and provoke much angry discussion. But what I mean to assert is this, that "the new constitution" has worked wonders; and that though I accepted and have resigned office since 1839—though I have shared the highest honors to be won under it, and breasted the fiercest persecution to be endured, I still believe it possesses within itself a remedial power for most Colonial evils; and that as the Colonies would have been lost but for its introduction, to work securely for the future, with provident forecast and unity of design, your Lordship must build on the foundations already laid.

Some are of opinion, that self-government should be secured to these Provinces by Act of Parliament, but there is no necessity for this. You have no Act of Parliament to define the duty of the Sovereign when ministers are in a minority—we want none, to enable us to suggest to a Governor when his advisers have lost the confidence of our Colonial Assemblies.* But what we do want, my Lord, is a rigid enforcement of British practice, by the Imperial authorities, on every Governor—the intelligence, and public spirit of the people, will supply the rest. Leave the Representatives of Her Majesty free to select their advisers from any of the parties which exist in the countries they govern, but let it be understood that they must hold the balance even—that they must not become partizans themselves—and that when, from incapacity, personal quarrels, or want of tact, they are unable to fill up the chief offices—secure the supplies—and conduct the Government with efficiency, by the aid of a good working majority, their

* It is sometimes said, the Mother Country has its Great Charter—its Bill of Rights, and why should we not have a Charter, or some such written guarantee for our liberties. Those who reason thus, forget that these great securities of Britons, are ours also—that we have besides, the whole body of Parliamentary precedents accumulated by the practice of the Imperial Legislature. We have more: we have our Colonial precedents, since 1840—the Resolutions recorded on the Journals of Canada and Nova Scotia, and other authoritative declarations, made with the sanction of the Imperial Government, and which cannot be withdrawn.

removal will be the inevitable result. Not their removal only. Your Lordship will, I hope, pardon me, if, at some hazard of giving offence, I venture to discuss a point of great delicacy, and suggest that at least an unsuccessful and incapable Governor should incur the penalty of failure and incapacity in all other branches of the public service.

Let me not be misunderstood. In discussing broad questions, which involve national interests—the happiness of great countries—the peace and security of an Empire, I cannot descend to aim a personal allusion ; or to illustrate, even by unanswerable evidence, drawn from a single Province, an argument, however sound. I speak of *future* Governors, as a class of public servants, and I seek to examine the rules and the policy by which they should be controlled, in language chastened by the exalted presence in which I speak, and the magnitude of the interests committed to their care. Loss of office and emolument—stoppage of promotion—are the penalties which British colonists are to pay, under the new system, for misdirection of the Sovereign's Representative—for want of talent, discretion, and success. We are content to serve our country on these terms : and even if some gross delusion—some unprincipled combination, or shift of public opinion, unjustly bear us down, we shrink not from hazards, which your Lordship, acting in a wider field, is content to share. Many a good Knight, whose foundered horse—frail lance, or untempered blade, sent him discomfited from the arena, felt the severity while he bowed to the majesty of those jaws by which alone martial prowess could be sustained ; but how many good Knights would there have been, had the Sovereign bestowed the laurel without discrimination ; had the coward and the valiant—the graceful and the awkward—the courteous and the rude—the successful and the unsuccessful, been alike rewarded ? What interest would

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the spectators have taken in contests, where the highest qualities, and evidences of manhood, brought no distinction—and the want of them no disgrace?

Why should a different rule be applied to Colonial Governors? When we read of the impunity which Roman Pro-consuls purchased in the Capital, for mal-administration in the Provinces, we cease to wonder at the disorders they provoked; or that the local humours, suffered without attention to irritate the extremities, by a geometric scale of retribution, in which the velocity of the approach was regulated by the square of the iniquity, paralyzed and corrupted the heart. The ingenuous youth of England, who pore over their Classics at Eton and at Oxford, should be taught to feel, that the errors which ruined Rome, Great Britain has determined to avoid—that the point upon which she is peculiarly sensitive, jealous, and slow to forgive, is the misgovernment of one of her Provinces, however feeble or remote. The very opposite belief is fostered by the facts which our Colonial experience has accumulated. Many Governors have ruled these North American Provinces since the revolutionary war, and the aggregate of their virtues and capacities—the result of their labours, was vividly described in Lord Durham's Report. Some able and excellent men we certainly have had: but not a few, who were strangely deficient in those qualities which command respect, communicate energy, and secure the affections of a free people.—There have been gradations of merit as of rank; but from the individuals who had scarcely genius sufficient to write a simple despatch, to the foremost file of able and enterprising statesmen, one common destiny has awaited them all—impunity, patronage, promotion. With the exception of Sir George Prevost, (a most amiable man, but one who, in exciting times, committed some military mistakes) not one was ever censured or disgraced. Further promotion may

have been declined by some, from increasing years and infirmities ; or may have been denied to others, who wanted a patron ; but I cannot discover that the grossest incapacity, the most palpable blunders, or the execration and ridicule of a whole misgoverned Province, ever ensured executive censure at home, or presented a barrier to further promotion. The evils and the injuries which flowed from such a system North America has endured ; but in her name, my Lord, I think I may be pardoned for desiring that it shall have an end. You try, by Court Martial, the officer who runs his ship upon a rock. Byng was shot for a deficiency of courage or of conduct ; and a gallant Regiment but recently trembled for its well earned honors, because it was supposed to have wavered for an instant on a field of carnage. Surely, my Lord, it is not too much to ask for some such security against misgovernment—for jealous watchfulness and patient investigation, where there have been violations of principle, or deviations from constitutional usage ; and if, with tenderness for human frailty, we seek no higher punishment, at least there should be a bar to further promotion. A few examples would produce a salutary effect—create a higher standard of enterprise and ability, and infuse universal confidence in their Imperial rulers among our transatlantic population.

The mode of administration which I have ever advocated, and for the introduction of which your Lordship's Despatches of 1839, paved the way, exempts Colonial Governors from all responsibility to those they rule. Englishmen hold that the Queen can do no wrong, but enforce upon her Majesty's advisers rigid accountability. Adopting the constitutional fiction, we are contented to admit that those who represent the Sovereign here, can do no wrong in our eyes, so long as our right is admitted to call to account, for every executive act, those who sit in Council with them, and

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preside over the chief Departments. The practice is convenient, and, on both sides of the water, fraught with many advantages. There is a slight distinction, however, which should ever be borne in mind. At home there is the ultima ratio of a revolution, which, though rarely resorted to, subjects the Crown to heavy responsibility, the constitutional maxim to the contrary notwithstanding. The Sovereign is responsible to the whole body of the nation, and the surest safeguard of existing Institutions under a bad monarch, is to be found in the historical examples which prove how this accountability may be enforced. Our ultima ratio, it is clear, lies not in an appeal to arms, but to the Government at Home. It should be the care, then, of the Imperial authorities, to make every Colonial Governor feel that his responsibility to his Sovereign is a reality, and not a fiction. "I can devolve *my* responsibility on no man"—"my duty to my Sovereign compells," and such like phrases, which Governors often repeat with a flippancy that raises an incredulous smile on the face of a colonist, would then be words of fearful import, and deep significance, pronounced with grave deliberation, and conveying an assurance of good faith, upon which North Americans would securely rely.

Under any system, but particularly under the new, the most difficult and delicate task which devolves upon the Colonial minister, is the selection of Governors. Assuming the absence of nepotism, or of any unworthy motive, the wide range of employments, the varied accomplishments and talents, included in the Military, Naval, and Civil Services of the Empire, would seem to ensure us against danger and disappointment in the choice of our rulers. But yet we have often been disappointed—and the bungling and perils of the past should make us careful for the future. The Cabinet called to select a Governor for a North American Province, under existing circumstances, should never

forget that there are twenty millions of Anglo-Saxons electing their own Governors across the border, and they should endeavor to prevent the contrasts not unfrequently drawn. They should invariably act upon the policy, that, to repress the tendency to follow a practice incompatible with monarchical institutions, nothing should be left for the colonists to desire.

But, it may be said, in Britain, we provide Sovereigns by hereditary succession, and yet we are well governed, because our constitutional practice divests them of political influence. This is a popular fallacy, which stands "not proven" by all the historical evidence that our annals supply. Grant that no Sovereign can withstand the pressure of public opinion, when the people are organized, and Executive influence in Parliament is controlled by the stern mandate of the nation, yet how few such epochs are there even in the longest reign? Grant that a good measure cannot be refused to clamoring millions, represented by a great party in the State—yet how often have measures been delayed, and parties broken and scattered to the winds, by the personal influence of the Sovereign? This personal influence pervades the Court—is felt in Parliament—in the diplomatic intrigues of foreign countries—in the elevation or discouragement of rival statesmen—it is ever active, and all pervading, often when the nation is indifferent or asleep. The theory of our Constitution yields this personal influence to the Sovereign, and assumes that it will be wisely exercised. The theory of our Colonial Constitutions invests every Representative of Majesty with high personal influence, and that it should be exercised with great probity and discretion, your Lordship will at once perceive. Your security against abuse, lies in the hereditary transmission of high qualities—we have no security, but the honor and the discernment of the Imperial Cabinet. This single point,

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the selection of a Governor, is perhaps the only one that much concerns us; upon which we can exercise no influence. We must confide altogether in the judgment and good faith of our brethren at home. If they send us a tyrant or a fool, we may control or instruct him—but the process involves a monstrous waste of time, and engenders feelings, which, like fire damp in mines, are insidiously injurious, even when they do not explode. As a general rule, be assured, my Lord that every bad Governor sent to a Province, makes a certain number of republicans—that every good one reflects his Sovereign's image far down into the Colonial heart. These "golden links" between Great Britain and her North American Provinces, must be alloyed by no base metal: the best material, tried by the severest process of refinement, should be selected, that they may be worn as ornaments, and not regarded as chains.

I am aware that the selection of Governors, for North America, at the present time, is no easy task: because men of a different order of mind, and with a higher style of training, than pass muster in other portions of the Empire, are required by the exigencies of this continent. To understand this, my Lord, let us take a Governor of Massachusetts, and enquire by what steps he has risen to the elevation he enjoys, and by what process his mind has been ripened for the fitting discharge of his high functions. Born within the State, he is essentially a citizen, bound to her by filial and patriotic feelings—his early studies, not less than the active pursuits of manhood, make him familiar with her people, and their diversified interests. The struggles by which he ascends, through the hustings to the House of Representatives, and thence to the Senate; presiding, it may be, at times, over one branch or the other, give him a training and experience eminently calculated to prepare him for the gubernatorial chair. To provide for the British Colonies Governors to work our monarchical system as these

men work their's, is "a consummation devoutly to be wished." Yet they must be had : we cannot afford to repeat the blunders of the past, and we cannot harmoniously develope and apply the vital principle of responsibility without them.

At a first glance, it would seem a simple matter to draw, from the widely extended range, and diversified intellectual resources, of the Empire, the persons we want ; yet there are difficulties which meet us on every field of selection. Men are trained for the Army, the Navy, and for the diplomatic service of the state ; but we have no Normal School for the education of Colonial Governors. The consequence is, that two or three Provinces are often mismanaged before the neophyte has learned to govern well, if indeed he ever learns. This is not to be wondered at, when we regard the mixed character of the society into which, at a few weeks' notice, he is often thrown ; and the complicated duties that, without any previous training, he is required to discharge. On one point, there is rarely much to apprehend : British Governors, with few exceptions, are gentlemen ; in ease and dignity of manner, sprightly conversation, and general acquaintance with foreign countries, they contrast favorably with those who preside over some of the neighboring states ; in solid information—knowledge of general principles—familiar acquaintance with British and Provincial History, and sympathy with the people they are called to rule, they are often very inferior. One radical defect in their education, frequently requires years of experience to overcome. A Commander in the Navy, or a General of Division, has been accustomed to see masses of men moved by the boatswain's whistle, or the sound of the bugle. He has been taught to expect from all beneath him, the most prompt and servile obedience—which again he is prepared to pay to his superiors. Transferred to East Indian Provinces, or to Crown Colonies, where there are no Legislatures, no res-

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possibility, no organized and ever active public opinion ; where a semi-barbarous population have been oppressed by a despotism less enlightened and humane ; these officers often make excellent Governors, and infuse into the ignorant and unenterprising masses a respect for their characters and ready obedience to their discipline. But, transferred to North America, where English, Irish and Scotchmen, and their descendants, form the entire population of a Province—where every principle of the Common Law is fearlessly propounded from the Bench—where every limitation of the prerogative is asserted by the Legislature—where a Press, free to the verge of licentiousness, embodies and influences public opinion—where men of equal ability meet them at every turn ; while the least informed peasant in the fields, is conscious of his British origin, and of the rights with which it invests him : transferred to such a scene, the old Sailors or Soldiers often lose their self possession. The bugle is sounded or the whistle blown, but nobody moves, or moves in the right direction. The “one man power” is not acknowledged, but the power of the people is asserted, with an admirable composure that only John Bull himself could equal. Now, in all this, my Lord, there is nothing that an intelligent Colonist, or an Englishman familiar with North America, would not expect to find, and be prepared to deal with on the instant. He would at once treat the population as your Lordship treats the people of England, with deference and respect—neither chafing at their British manifestations of personal spirit and independence, nor at their rigid adherence to constitutional principles. He would guard the prerogatives of the Crown with simple dignity, and make the Queen's name a tower of strength by never taking it in vain. He would act with or by any party, prepared with a good measure, or enjoying the confidence of the people, without railing at party, which, in every British community, enjoying representative

institutions, must exist. He would choose men of ability to fill the Executive Departments, and be never so happy as when their conduct evinced the wisdom of the selection. He would never yield to petty jealousy of his own advisers, if they happened to be men of higher attainments and sounder judgment than himself; but would bear in mind the reflected merit, implied in the defence of Queen Elizabeth—that when wise men govern a country, the Sovereign by whom they are selected and retained, cannot be a fool. He would have no friends, in the unconstitutional sense which implies back stair influence and intrigue—but, at the same time, would have no enemies: being prepared to bow any set of men out of his Cabinet who had lost the confidence of the people, or to admit any other set into it by whom that excellent certificate of character was produced.

If, then, Governors are to be selected from the United Services, it is evident that mere soldiers or sailors are not to be preferred. I do not say that men should be rejected, because they have fought for their country: the highest qualities of the warrior and the statesman have often been combined; but if we are to have rulers snatched from the tented field or the quarter deck, they should be men to whom the British Constitution does not appear a prurient excrescence, defacing the articles of war—men of enlarged minds, accustomed to affairs—studious of the history of their country, and possessing great command of temper.

The diplomatic service is often presented as a good school. It has its advantages, but there are some drawbacks. The diplomatist, who goes into a distant country, often regards himself, and is regarded, as the secret foe of the State to which he is accredited, from the moment he passes its barriers. His latent hostility—his vigilant espionage—his corruption and intrigue, are veiled under a courtliness of manner, an air of frankness, and a strict ob-

servance of all the forms of official etiquette. All who approach him are suspected ; and the tools he employs are feared while they are doing mischief—despised when it is done. Transfer such a man to a North American Colony, and he may “ forget his cunning ;” he may remember that he is dealing with British subjects—administering a constitutional system, as a Governor—not acting as a spy ; he may bestow confidence, and win it : but he is just as likely to have finished his term of office before he unlearns the vices of his old profession, as he is to enter at once upon a successful career, in virtue of the *diablerie* to which he has been trained. If Diplomats are to come, then, to the Colonies, let them, if possible, be those who have served in free countries—who are familiar with the spirit, and the modes of conducting business, in popular assemblies. If they have sat in either House of Parliament, so much the better ; but let them be men observant of its forms—imbued with its spirit—tolerant even of its eccentricities, and prepared to work out, on a smaller scale, the practical advantages which these, in the main, secure.

The Peerage, and the House of Commons, could we draw upon the best materials which are found in these great schools of political instruction, would leave us nothing to desire. Could we always be secure of a Durham or a Sydenham, we should have nothing to fear for the prosperous developement of our resources, or the permanence of British dominion. But the prizes of Imperial public life are so splendid—the noble emulation of these great arenas is so engrossing, that the finer spirits, surrounded by party obligations, or fired with elevated ambition, can seldom be induced to accept, but at some peculiar crisis, or for a special object, the most distinguished North American position. The smaller Colonies can rarely hope for any but selections from that larger class, that, for obvious reasons, can be better spared. Men of sound sense—active business ha-

bits—cultivated tastes, and gentlemanly manners, may ever be found in this grade ; and if they have studied the peculiarities of transatlantic society and politics, may make good Colonial Governors. But they must come out prepared to find, at the Colonial Hustings, the “ fierce democracy ” they left at home—in the Colonial Courts, Advocates as fearless as in Westminster Hall—a Press as free as that of England ; and a numerous class of public men, who will, within the forms and safeguards of the constitution, work with and for them ; but who would not, for the smile of any Governor, sacrifice the confidence or betray the interests of the country of their birth, and in which it is their highest ambition to leave an honest fame.

Your Lordship will perceive that I lay great stress upon the selection of Governors. The importance of this I could illustrate by examples ; but, looking to a hopeful future, desire to explain my views without any but the most delicate references to the past. A Governor, once appointed—his “ instructions ” are of some importance : these should—except in extraordinary cases, where some special difficulty has arisen, for which the ordinary forms of the Constitution provide no remedy—be as few, as simple, and as concise, as possible. There is an old Code which was, and I presume is yet, sent to the Colonial Governors, whole passages of which I fear are obsolete, and inapplicable to the present condition of affairs. This Book ought to be revised, and if a copy of it were submitted to the criticism of some of the leading minds of North America, they might furnish valuable suggestions to the Colonial Secretary, and aid in making it much more perfect. For my own part, I would no more trammel a Governor, than I would a General or an Admiral, with many instructions. Having selected the right kind of man, I should be strongly inclined to condense the whole into a few lines :

Enforce, within your Government, the Imperial Statutes.
Maintain the prerogatives of the Crown.

Respect the Laws, and the rights of the Subject.

Secure, by strict observance of British practice, a working majority in the Legislature.

Remember that the Queen's Representative is the fountain of Honor, of Justice, and of Mercy—he must offer no insult, and should have no enemies.

With these brief instructions, I would leave a Colonial Governor a large discretion, give him a fair support, but remind him of the tenure by which his office was held, "if you succeed you shall be rewarded, promotion stops if you fail."

To enable your Lordship to fulfil the pledge, made in the Speech referred to in the opening, there is little else required than I have included in this letter. Leave us free to work Representative Institutions after the British mode—select your Governors with care—give them concise and definite Instructions, and hold the scales of honor and dishonor before them with an unwavering hand: then will the work commenced in 1840 be completed in 1846—then will British Americans enjoy self-government without danger to their allegiance, and have only themselves to blame if they are not as prosperous as they are free.

In my next I shall invite your Lordship's attention to some points, which touch less our internal Government than our external relations to the rest of the Empire; and, in the meantime, trusting that you will ascribe the liberty I have taken to the right motive, I have the honor to remain,

With much respect,

Your Lordship's obedient,

And very humble servant,

JOSEPH HOWE.

NOVA-SCOTIA, October, 1846.

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LETTER II.

MY LORD,

The system of internal self-Government, to the consolidation of which your Lordship's attention was invited in a former Letter, is essential to the preservation and peaceful improvement of these Colonies. It must be left to its operation. Frankly yielded, with the consent of all parties, at home, it has been embraced by all parties in North America; and will be maintained with consistency, and worked with prudence, worthy of the descendants of those who secured similar privileges by the Revolution of 1688. My firm belief is, that successive generations of loyal British subjects, respecting the paramount controul of the Imperial authorities, but firmly resisting unnecessary and vexatious interference, will continue to expand and apply the principles developed within the last seven years, until the "girdled trees," described by Lord Durham, have become sturdy British oaks, fast rooted in the generous soil of the constitution, and flourishing beside their venerable parent stem.

To give full effect to this system, it will be perceived that the true policy of British statesmen, except on the single point of the selection of Governors, is to be rather passive than active—to maintain a "masterly inactivity"—to do for us what the French merchant desired of the French king, to "let us alone:" to discourage complaints and references to the Colonial Office, and to throw the responsibility on the Executive advisers of the Queen's Representative, who must combine and carry with them a working majority in the Provincial Legislature. The prerogatives

of the Crown—the authority of Parliament—the surveillance of the Colonial Secretary, will still exist, and be all the more respected, that they rarely disturb internal administration, or attempt to controul the free current of public opinion. Every officer, from the highest to the lowest, will still be the Queen's officer—bearing her Majesty's commission, and holding it during pleasure. Every Imperial Statute will be enforced in the Colonial Courts—every road will be the Queen's highway—every militia man the Queen's soldier—every Despatch from the Colonial Office will be received with the deference and respect to which it is entitled. All that is essential to the dignity of the Crown, and the unity of the Empire, will be retained by the Mother Country—all that is indispensable to a wise internal administration, will be freely conceded, and mutual confidence, and mutual prosperity, be the natural results.

Having disposed of this branch of the subject, let me now invite your Lordship to a field of labour, that British statesmen may legitimately occupy—one worthy of your talents, and of the elevated reputation for decision and enterprise which you enjoy. I have long entertained some views, that I cannot but flatter myself will have weight with the present Cabinet: and which appear deserving of mature consideration by all, who not only desire to see these colonies flourish under free Institutions, but indissolubly incorporated as integral portions of the glorious British Empire.

Apart from questions of internal administration, upon which I conceive that enough has been already said, there is another aspect in which our North American Provinces should be viewed—their external relations to the Parent Country, and to the Empire at large. Regarded in this aspect, there is much that may be done for them—much that a wise statesman would not consider unworthy of some reflection, and of active interference in their behalf. Pas-

sing over, for the present, some questions of internal improvement, and others of political organization, in which the interference of the Mother Country would materially strengthen and elevate the whole group, let me ask your Lordship to consider whether, in all that relates to the general concerns of the Empire, a wiser use may not be made of the intellectual and physical resources of this continent, and whether a wider field may not be opened for the emulation and honorable aspirations of its public men.

To understand the importance of the subject, as it has again and again presented itself to my mind, it will be necessary for your Lordship to fancy yourself a Colonist, looking abroad, on the one side, at the fields of ambition and influence, presented by the Empire of which he is a member ; and, on the other, at the positions atchieved by the most humble citizens of the neighbouring United States. The saddening reflection with which he withdraws his eye, to contemplate the narrow range of Provincial ambition—the lowly walks in which he is condemned to tread—the limited circle of influence, beyond which he can never hope to rise, would be felt in its full force by your Lordship, if your were a British American, even though your popular qualities were questionable, and the strength of your wing untried.

Let me illustrate the subject by a few simple contrasts. An Anglo-Saxon youth, born in Massachusetts, may rise through every grade of office till he is governor of his native State. A youth, born in Nova Scotia, may do the same, with the single exception of the highest position, that of Governor : but if he is denied this distinction, he may, de facto, govern his country, as leader of her councils, if he possess the foremost mind of the Provincial Administration. So far there is an equality of condition, which leaves to a colonist little to envy or to desire—but, the highest point once reached, he must check his flight and smother his ambition ; while the young Republican may continue to soar, with

prospects expanding as he ascends ; until, long after his contemporary across the border, weary of the dull round of provincial public life, has ceased to hope, or to improve, in the full vigour of manhood, and with a rich maturity of intellect, he reaches that elevated station, to which he has been wafted by the suffrages of twenty millions of freemen.

The Boston boy may become President of the United States—the young native of Halifax or Quebec can never be any thing but a member of an Executive Council, with some paltry office, paid by a moderate salary. The contrast is very striking, and well deserves the grave consideration of those who may not regard it as too high a price to pay for the unwavering attachment of British America, that its youth should be admitted to some participation in the higher employments and distinctions of the empire. I have known men, who, as Loyalists, left the old Colonies, and died in the Provinces, undistinguished and unknown beyond their borders—while their co-temporaries, scarcely their superiors in intellect, or more successful up to the points where the conflict of principle compelled them to diverge, occupied the foremost rank in the Republic. There are men now, in North America, who, if these Provinces were States of the Union, would be Generals, Senators, Governors, Secretaries of State, or Foreign Ambassadors. I have seen and heard those who figure in the State Legislatures, and in Congress ; and, with a few exceptions, (formed by the inspiring conflicts and great questions of a vast country) I could have picked their equals from among her Majesty's subjects, on this continent, at any time within the last ten or fifteen years.

The old Loyalists died contented, and their descendants, in these Provinces, are loyal and contented still—but, my Lord, should not a wise Statesman anticipate the time, when these contrasts will sink deep into the provincial mind—when successive groups of eminent and able men will have lived, and drooped, and died—hopeless, aimless, and undis-

tinguished beyond the narrow confines of a single province ; when genius, with its plumage fluttering against the wires, feeling itself " cabined, cribbed, confined," may raise a note of thrilling discontent, or maddening ambition, to be caught up and re-echoed by a race, to whom remonstrance and concession may come too late ?

For obvious reasons, my Lord, I do not dwell on this topic. A dull man would not understand me, but there is that within your Lordship's own bosom which can tell you, in a throb, what we feel, and what we want. A few simple touches are all that are required, or I am mistaken, to deeply interest you ; and, when once your generous nature, and acute understanding, are excited to activity, the paths of honorable emulation will be open, and all ground of complaint removed. I do not disguise from your Lordship that there are difficulties surrounding this subject—it is my purpose to discuss them fairly ; because, upon the Colonists should rest, in such a case as this, not only the burthen of complaint that a grievance exists, but the task of explaining how it may be removed.

The population of North America cannot be far short of two millions. With a boundless extent of territory to occupy, and abundance of food, our people will increase, by the close of the present century, even if no general plan of emigration be superinduced on our present system, to twelve millions. To incorporate these twelve millions with the Empire—to make them feel and think as Englishmen, it is clear that all the employments of the Empire must be open to them, and the highest privileges of British subjects conferred. If this cannot be done, a separate national existence, or an incorporation with the United States, are dangers to be gravely apprehended. Surely, then, it is a point of policy well worthy to be revolved by British statesmen, how these North Americans can be so deeply interested in the honour and unity of the Empire, as to

preserve them "in the bonds of peace," and make them attached and loyal subjects of the Crown. By conferring upon them the advantages of self-government, and control over their own internal affairs, a most important advance has been made towards the achievement of this happy consummation. And now is the time, before there is any wide spread discontent, or clamorous demand, to anticipate, and provide for, a state of feeling, which must inevitably arise out of the practical exclusion of the population from the official employments and higher honors of the Empire.

But it may be asked—are they so excluded? Seats in Parliament—the Army—the Navy—the Diplomatic and Civil Services of the State are open to all—there is no legal barrier—no rule of exclusion. In theory this is true—in practice it is an utter fallacy. Look around, my Lord, upon those departments, and while hundreds and thousands of English, Irish, and Scotchmen, throng them all, not twenty North Americans can be found. There are more Englishmen in the Post Office, and Customs Departments of a single Province, than there are Colonists in the whole wide range of Imperial employment. Why is this? It cannot be that our young men are deficient in courage, enterprise, or ambition—it cannot be that the prizes to be won here are more brilliant and attractive. There must be a reason for it, and the reason lies on the surface. Our youth have no patrons—no Parliamentary, or family, or official interest or influence, to push them forward in the race, or to render competition equal. They are not on the spot to seek for commissions that are bestowed for the asking; and they cannot hope to succeed, where other recommendations besides ability and good conduct are required. The result is that the two millions of North Americans are practically excluded, as the twelve millions will be, by-and-bye, if no provision be made for their peculiar position and claims.

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Suppose a young North American to enter the Army with an Englishman of the same age. In nine cases out of ten, by the possession of more ample means, the latter would rise by purchase over the head of the former, merit being equal. But, if the Englishman were the son of a Peer, or of a member of Parliament—if his family had interest at the Horse Guards, or in a County or Borough which sustained the administration, the young Colonist, if he did not fall in some well fought field, (as most of my countrymen have done, who have tried the experiment,) would be distanced in the race, and retire in old age on a Subaltern's or Captain's half-pay, while his more favoured competitor became a General of Brigade. This, my Lord, whatever may be said of it, is practical exclusion from the Army. In a few solitary instances, higher positions may have been won, but they are exceptions which prove the rule.

In the Navy, merit has, perhaps, a fairer chance—as promotion is not purchased ; but still interest and influence are there all-powerful : and a young Colonist, on the deck of a British frigate, does not feel that it is a fair stage where there is no favour. I grant that, in either service, some gallant exploit—some exhibition of rare personal valor or conduct, would attract notice, and confer distinction—but the opportunities do not occur every day : and when they do, and when they are seized, I doubt if the exploits of the young Colonist, friendless and alone in the world, will figure as largely in the Official Despatch, as they would if his uncle were a Lord of the Admiralty, or his father member for Bristol.

But, it may be said, the Colonist, without fortune or interest, stands upon an equality with the Englishman who is no better off. This may be true, but yet does not improve our position, or weaken the argument—it reduces us to a

level with the lowest class of Britons, but does not raise us to an equality with the better classes, or with the New-Englanders over the border. The time is fast approaching, or I am much mistaken, when Englishmen will consider it as disgraceful to sell a Commission in the Army as they would to sell a seat upon the bench—when merit, and not interest, will be the rule in both services ; and when, having ceased to eat dear bread for the benefit of a few, they will not vote heavy Army and Navy Estimates, without the great body of the people are freely admitted to an equal participation in the patronage and promotion maintained by their expenditure. When that day arrives, and it may be nearer than we think, the Colonists will have nothing to complain of—until it comes, some steps should be taken to remove all ground of complaint, and to associate North Americans with the habitual defence of the British flag. I must confess that I feel a degree of diffidence in offering suggestions on a point, which, for its full elucidation, would require some professional information and experience ; but there is one passage in British history that may furnish something like a precedent.

When the Highland Regiments were raised, the districts whence they were drawn were generally disaffected. The embers left, when two unsuccessful rebellions had been trodden out, were still smouldering, and ready to be enkindled—Jacobite songs were the prevailing literature of the glens ; and broadswords were bequeathed from father to son, with the dying injunction, that they were only to be used in defence of “ the King over the water.” Chatham saw, that to incorporate the Scottish highlands with the rest of the Empire—to make their hardy mountaineers loyal British subjects, it was only necessary to give them something to do, and something to be proud of : to direct their chivalrous valour upon a foreign foe—to let them win lau-

rels and fortune under the House of Brunswick. The experiment was regarded as hazardous at the time, but how nobly the result confirmed the sagacity of the great statesman. On almost every battle field for the last century, the prowess of these Scottish Regiments has shown conspicuous. The tales, told on their return, by maimed but honored veterans, of the heights of Abraham—of Egypt—Toulouse—Vittoria, and Waterloo, have superseded the exploits of Charles and Bonnie Dundee. The Regiments in which their fathers and brothers had served, were readily recruited from the ardent youth born among the heather. Glencoe and Culloden were forgotten—a new spirit pervaded the Highlands; and, even to the extremity of the “black north,” the fusion of the Scottish race with “the Southron” is acknowledged on all hands to be complete.

Now, my Lord, try some such experiment in North America. Raise two or three Regiments—train Colonists to command them—let it be understood that, in those corps, merit only leads to promotion; and give them, in name, or dress, or banner, something to mark the Province whence they come. Try a frigate or two on the same principle: call one of them *THE NOVA SCOTIA*; man her with the hardy fishermen who line our sea coast, and hoist the Mayflower beneath the Union Jack, when she goes into action. Those regiments may flinch in the hour of trial, but no man who reads this letter, from Funday to Michigan, will believe it—that ship may sink, but there is not a Nova Scotian, who would not rather go down in her, than have her flag disgraced. From the heads of those regiments, and the quarter decks of those ships, the fiery spirits of North America would pass, if they were worthy, into the higher grades of both services: they would be to us what the Academy of West Point is to the youth of republican America, schools of instruction and discipline; and then we should be prepared, not to envy our neighbors, but to meet them on the frontier, or on the coast, when the meteor flag of England was unfurled.

Turning to the civil service of the State, we find the Colonists practically excluded. Some of them hold subordinate places in the Imperial Departments, whose branches extend into the Provinces in which they reside ; but the higher positions, even in these, are generally engrossed by natives of the Mother Country, who have had the good fortune to enjoy Parliamentary or family influence. Of this we should not complain, if we had the same means of pushing our fortunes at home, or in other portions of the Empire. There is one Department, to employment in which we fancy we have a peculiar claim—the Colonial Office. Your Lordship may be startled ; and others, who have never given the subject a thought, may be disposed to sneer. But there have been, occasionally, worse Clerks and Under Secretaries than North America could have supplied, within my political remembrance. From the Bench, the Bar, the Legislatures, abundance of material could be selected, to give to that Department a character for efficiency which it has rarely enjoyed ; and to draw around it a degree of confidence that it can hardly hope to attain, while the leading minds produced by the great countries committed to its care are practically excluded from its deliberations. I could quote twenty cases, in which one North American, by the Colonial Secretary's side, would have prevented much mischief—scores of exciting and protracted controversies, that might have been closed by a single Despatch ; and I have listened to and read speeches in Parliament, which the merest political tyro in the Provinces would be ashamed to deliver. I feel, my Lord, that this is bold speaking, and delicate ground ; but I shall be much mistaken in your Lordship's noble nature, and in the improved organization of the Colonial Office, under Earl Grey, if offence is given.

Before touching upon the means by which this very essential Department may be recruited from the Colonies, let me direct attention to the grounds of my belief, that an important preliminary step should first be taken.

The concessions made to these Provinces provide only for their internal Administration, and their external relations—with each other, with the Mother Country, and with the Empire at large, still remain to be dealt with by the Imperial Parliament; and the question naturally arises, whether the time has not arrived when they are fairly entitled to some representation in the National Councils? Your Lordship may be surprised at the suggestion, but weigh this matter calmly. North America is nearly as much interested in every question of commercial regulation—of foreign policy—of emigration—religious equality—peace and war, as are the inhabitants of the British Isles. If she were an independent Nation, besides controlling her internal government, she would protect her own interest in the arrangement of them all. Did the Provinces form States of the American Union, they would have their representation in Congress; and would influence, to the extent of their quota, whatever it was, the national policy. Now my Lord, is it too much to ask, of those who desire to avert any such change of position, that analogous privileges, suited to our circumstances and claims, should be conferred? Is it not better that the Mother Country should magnanimously take the initiative in this matter, before clamour and discontent prevail—before factious spirits seize upon a theme admirably adapted for popular declamation? My object, my Lord, is not to sound a key note of unnecessary alarm, but to anticipate the dissonance that may possibly arise. I wish to put an end, at once and forever, to the fears of the timid within our own borders, and to the hopes of adversaries beyond them. I desire to come promptly to a state of things which all parties may acknowledge as mutually satisfactory, and recognize as permanent. I am weary of hearing English politicians speculating on the probabilities of separation—of seeing American sympathy excited by the vain hope of Colonial disaffection. I would that foreigners should see and feel that British Americans have nothing to complain of, and

nothing to desire—that they have attained a position by peaceful loyalty and moral suasion, which their neighbors only won, by a disruption of old ties, and by the painful sacrifices of a bloody revolution.

But, it may be said, if you desire representation in the Imperial Parliament, you must be prepared to part with your local legislatures, and to submit to equality of taxation. Nothing would be fairer, if equality of representation was the thing sought—but this, for obvious reasons, would be an impolitic demand ; and any scheme to carry it out, would be found, on due reflection, to be impracticable. To place in the House of Commons Representatives from all the Colonies, in proportion to their population, territory, and varied interests, would be to swell the numbers to a mob—to throw upon that body all the business now despatched by the Colonial Assemblies, would clog the wheels of legislation, even though Parliament sat throughout the year. Representation in this sense, and to this extent, then, is not what I desire—but a moderate degree of moral and intellectual communication between North America and the Imperial Parliament ; which, while it left all our existing machinery in full operation, would render that machinery more perfect : and, without investing us with any share of political influence that could by possibility excite jealousy at home, would yet secure to us, at least, the means of explanation, remonstrance and discussion. Suppose that the five North American Colonies were permitted to elect, in the following proportions, either through the Legislatures, or by the body of the constituency, men of talent, enjoying public confidence :

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Prince Edward Island,	1
Nova-Scotia,	2
New-Brunswick,	2
Newfoundland,	2
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and that the members, so elected, were permitted to sit and vote in the House of Commons : a number so small would neither be inconvenient, nor apt to excite jealousy, and yet they would give to North America a voice in the national Councils—an influence proportioned to the ability, information, and powers of debate, she furnished. It would give her more—it would give her a noble field for the display of her cultivated intellects, and open for the choicest of her sons a path to the higher distinctions and honours of the Empire. It would give to her less brilliant, but enterprising youth, seeking their fortunes in the Military, Naval, and Civil Services of the State, not patrons, for the influence of these Representatives would be trifling, but earnest and judicious friends, on the spot where their claims were to be stated, and their interests advanced.

Now, my Lord, would not such a concession as this—gracefully bestowed, almost before it was asked for, strengthen the Empire ? Would it not put republicans and sympathisers hors de combat, without a bayonet or a barrel of powder ? It would be worth half a dozen citadels ; and, on the day that those ten members took their seats in the House of Commons, you might withdraw thousands of men who are kept here at an enormous expense, to defend a country, the population of which, too happy for discontent, would guard with spirit the privileges thus peacefully secured.

But, my Lord, I do not put this moderate demand on the footing of a favour—to my mind it bears the semblance of simple justice. In every session of Parliament, measures are discussed, in which the Colonists are deeply concerned. Many times, within the last twenty years, the Colonial trade has been deranged—Colonial interests sacrificed ; and our views have been often strangely misinterpreted and misunderstood. If the general welfare were promoted, our sectional interests, of course, should not have stood in the way ; but even in those cases where you are right and we

are wrong, we would yet have the security of consultation — discussion — remonstrance. We would say, with becoming fortitude, "Strike, but hear us."

Take the recent case of the repeal of the Corn Laws. Of that measure I highly approve. As a youth, just entering into public life, I denounced the Corn Laws; and when they were doomed, I smiled at the fears expressed in Canada and elsewhere, and rejoiced with all my heart. But, my Lord, even a good measure hardly reconciles us to the fact, that the commercial relations and settled business of two millions of people should be dealt with, even in a wise and philosophic spirit, without their exercising upon the discussion, or the result, the slightest influence. Take another case. The North American Provinces might have been plunged into a war, arising out of the annexation of Texas, or the settlement of the Oregon question, without perhaps having the slightest interest, or desire to participate, in either quarrel. Happily such calamities were averted by the dignified firmness and moderation of the Imperial authorities—but similar controversies with foreign powers are continually arising, and may not always be so satisfactorily adjusted. The Colonial Legislatures do not pretend to meddle with any of these disputes: but is it reasonable to ask millions of Britons to take up arms—to suspend their commerce—to beat their ploughshares into swords, in a quarrel, upon the growth and deadly termination of which, they have never been consulted; and which they have had no power to influence or avert. The presence of such a body of men, as I propose, in Parliament, would remove this ground of complaint: if they were outvoted, we should at least have the satisfaction to reflect that they had been heard. In some cases, their reasoning would probably prevail, to the modification of a bad measure, or the improvement of a good one—in others they would be convinced, and would take pains to satisfy their constituents of the wisdom and sound

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policy of the course pursued. They would perform the double duty, of mingling Colonial sentiment and opinion with the current of debate, and of reconciling the Colonists to the decisions of Parliament. This they would do, if only permitted to speak and vote upon Colonial, or rather on Imperial questions; but if allowed a larger latitude, even in the discussion of purely British topics, they might at times exercise a salutary and temperate influence. If men of sound judgment, conciliatory manners, and cultivated taste, they would—from the very fact of their isolation, and impotence as a party—from their being strangers from a far country, with no interest in the matter; trained in a different school, and accustomed to examine similar questions with other lights, and from different points of view, sometimes be heard amidst the din of party conflict. They might, when the storm was highest, pour oil upon the troubled waters; and win respect for their intentions, when they failed to convince by their eloquence.

If these men—fairly tried on the great arena—were found to possess talents for debate, ready pens, and habits of business, where could better material be sought to recruit and strengthen the Colonial Office? Their local information and knowledge of detail, could not well be surpassed—their sympathy with the population of the Countries to be dealt with would not be suspected; and the double responsibility felt, to Parliament on the one side, and on the other, to the people among whom they would probably return to pass the evening of their days, would ensure the most vigilant and enlightened discharge of their public duties. And, my Lord, would it be nothing to have these men returning, every few years, from such scenes and employments, to mingle with and give a tone to the society of North America? How invaluable would be their experience—how enlarged their views—how familiar their acquaintance with the rules of Parliament, and the usages of the Constitution: but above all, how sound their faith in the magna-

nimity and honourable intentions of our brethren across the sea. These veterans would become guides to the Provincial Legislatures when questions of difficulty arose, and would embellish social life by the refinement of their manners, and the fruits of their large experience.

But, they would not all return. Some, it is to be hoped, richly endowed by nature, and improved by study, might win the favour of their Sovereign and the confidence of Parliament, and rise to the higher posts and employments of the State. If they did not, it would be because they were unworthy, and their Countrymen could not complain—if they did, the free participation of North Americans in the honors and rewards of the Empire, would be proved and illustrated; and a field would be opened to our youth, which would enable them to view with indifference the prizes for which their republican neighbours so ardently contend.

Mark, my Lord, the effects which this system would have upon our Legislatures, and upon our people. Is there a young man in North America, preparing for public life, who would be contented with the amount of study, and the limited range of information, now more than sufficient to enable him to make a figure in his Native Province? Not one—they would ever have before them the higher positions to be achieved, and the nobler field of competition on which they might be called to act. They would feel the influence of a more lively emulation—and subject themselves to a training more severe. Our Educational Institutions would improve—a higher standard of intellectual excellence would be created; and not only in society would the influence be felt, but in the Courts—the Press—and in the Provincial Parliaments, there would reign a purer taste, and a more elevated style of discussion.

These are a few of the advantages, my Lord, which I believe would flow from this concession. The views I entertain might be variously illustrated, and explained with more accuracy of detail; but I feel that your time is precious,

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and that once interested, your own vigorous understanding, and acute perception, will enable you to master the subject. There are other topics, which, at fitting occasions, I may take the liberty to press upon your Lordship's notice; but in the meantime beg you to believe, that, however crude my views may appear, or homely the style in which they are expressed, I have but two motives: a sincere desire to see your Lordship a successful Minister, and North America indissolubly incorporated with the British Empire.

My father left the old Colonies, at the Revolution, that he might live and die under the British flag. I wish to live and die under it too; but I desire to see its ample folds waving above a race worthy of the old banner, and of the spirit which has ever upheld it. I know North America well; and I am assured, that, while a feeling of confiding loyalty is very general, there is as universal a determination to rest satisfied with no inferiority of social or political condition. We must be Britons in every inspiring sense of the word: hence my anxiety to anticipate every generous aspiration—and to prepare the way for that full fruition of Imperial privileges, which I trust will leave to my Countrymen nothing to complain of and nothing to desire. Should your Lordship, to whom, as a Colonist, I feel we are largely indebted, adopt my views, I shall be amply repaid—should you reprove my boldness, or question my sagacity, it will not lessen the sincerity with which I subscribe myself,

With much respect,

Your Lordship's obedient,

And very humble servant,

JOSEPH HOWE.

NOVA-SCOTIA, October, 1846.